

# THE NETWORK

NURTURING EDUCATORS, TRAINING WORKERS, AND ORGANIZING RESOURCES FOR THE KINGDOM

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(This is a book review by Jan Palmer. If you have found some materials that have been a help to you or your church, feel free to send an article so we can share it with others.)



## HOORAY! LET'S PRAY!

Sounds exciting, doesn't it? If you are looking for a fresh approach to teaching and actually praying with children, this book is a good place to look.

You'll find hands-on activities about prayer basics, age-appropriate ideas for pre-schoolers, suggestions for anytime-anywhere prayers (using those teachable moments to practice the pray-at-all-times concept), special occasion or holiday prayers that will catch their attention, and a section on prayers using scripture. There are reproducible pages to use with many of the activities.

I especially appreciated the chapter on child development and multiple intelligences. The authors do a good job providing us with more ways of understanding our students, and the different ways they learn.

This book could be used with pre-schoolers through pre-adolescents. I'm using it this quarter with the Middle School SS class as we do a prayer focus. Guess what? I'm learning as much (more?) than they are. Hooray! Let's Pray! is available through Group Pub. & the editor is Lois Keffer.

## NET SUPPORT



Here are some wonderful Christmas sites, which may be too late for this year, but can be kept in mind for the future.

A complete Christmas Eve Program:  
<http://www.homiliesbyemail.com/Special/Christmas/complete1.html>

Legends of Christmas such as the poinsettia, holly, pine tree, tinsel, etc.  
<http://geocities.com/TimesSquare/Alley/4373/legends.html>

The Real Story & Christmas Cane - Christmas Skits  
[http://www.christiancrafters.com/skit\\_real\\_story.html](http://www.christiancrafters.com/skit_real_story.html)  
[http://www.christiancrafters.com/candy\\_cane.html](http://www.christiancrafters.com/candy_cane.html)



## GIFT IDEA: COOKIE JARS

Have kids make these instant cookie jars for everyone on your church staff.

For each staff person, layer in a quart jar: 2/3 teaspoons salt; 1/2 plus 1/8 cup flour; 1/3 cup cocoa; 1/2 cup flour; 2/3 cup brown sugar; 2/3 cup sugar; 1/2 cup milk or semisweet choc. chips; 1/2 cup vanilla flavored chips; and 1/2 cup nuts.

Write these directions on a card: Combine the contents of the jar with 1 teaspoon vanilla, 2/3 cup vegetable oil, and 3 eggs. Pour the batter into a greased pan and bake at 350 degrees. Bake for 32 to 37 minutes in a 9 X 11 inch pan or 27 to 32 minutes in a 9 X 9 inch pan.

Use pinking shears to cut a 4-inch square of fabric. Lay the fabric on top of the jar and use ribbon to tie the card around the fabric. This makes a beautiful and yummy gift.

## A SOUPER BOWL OF CARING



No, it's not a typo. You won't get blitzed or sacked. In fact, everyone comes out of this game a winner! The **Souper** Bowl of Caring is a simple yet significant effort that encourages fans to team-up for a different sort of victory.

On Super Bowl Sunday, **January 26, 2003**, churches across the country will aim to raise millions for soup kitchens, food banks and other charities across the country. Simply have children stand with soup pots at the church door and encourage everyone to give \$1.00, or a can of soup for your local food pantry.

There's no better day than Super Bowl Sunday, in which we enjoy food and drink, to spread the message in our churches that God calls all of us to share our abundance with people in great need. <http://www.souperbowl.com/>



## VALENTINE POCKETS



An easy craft to make. These could be used as encouragement to mission workers or as a thank you to church volunteers.

Cut construction paper in the shape of 2 large hearts of the same size. Staple the 2 heart shapes together along the bottom edges and up the sides. Leave the top open to put in Valentine's Day treats or for messages of encouragement and love. Decorate the heart as desired using various supplies. Here's a few ideas: lace, ribbon, stickers, small heart shapes, glitter, paper doilies, sequins, markers or crayons, etc.

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## A NEW YEAR OBJECT LESSON



You will need a 2002 calendar and a 2003 calendar.

Today I have a couple of calendars with me. This calendar is for the year 2002. As you know, we are almost to the end of 2002. You can see this calendar is all marked up with the things I did last year. And soon, it will be of no use at all. This is my new calendar for the year 2003. You can see how nice and clean all of the pages are. This calendar is all ready for me to start planning for next year. Whenever I make an appointment or have something important to remember, I will mark it on this calendar. Pretty soon, my new calendar will start to look a lot like the old calendar as I make plans for the future.

There is nothing wrong in planning for the future, but we need to remember that no matter what our plans may be, we can't know for sure what is in the future. The Bible says, "Since no man knows the future, who can tell him what is to come?" We can put appointments on this calendar from now to next December, but the only day that we can be sure of is today! Some people become worried and frightened because they can't be sure of the future, but we don't need to worry, because even though we don't know what the future holds, we know who holds the future. The future is in God's hands, so we can rest easy in the plans that He has made for us. We can't be sure of tomorrow, but we have today, so we need to try to live it the way God planned it!

Prayer: Lord, thank you for giving us today. Help us to live it the way you have planned it.

## **WHY SOME TEENS SAY THEY DON'T ATTEND SUNDAY SCHOOL**

(And some ideas that might help!)

1. "I'm Too Busy For SS". Keep lessons flexible. Make sure each lesson is complete so that kids don't feel left out if they miss a week or two. Hold a mid-week class aimed at kids who can't get there on Sunday.

2. "I'm Too Old For SS." Youth should realize that no one ever learns everything there is to know about God, the Bible and how to live the life God wants us to live. Interesting, relevant classes that keep kids actively involved will help.

3. "The Church Doesn't Care About Me." By planning a program that recognizes the needs and interests of their young members and utilizes their talents, a church can do much to keep the teens interested.

4. "Sunday School Is Dull And Boring." Classes for teens require the very best teachers. Give them all the help you can with training opportunities, resources, etc. Support them with prayer. Team teaching helps the lesson flow faster and keeps kids involved. Be sure lessons are relevant to the needs of your teens and help them find answers to the questions and problems that they have.

(This article appeared in the "Spring, 1993" issue of "The Herald." Pennsylvania State Sunday School Association.)

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## **Create A Church Prayer Calendar**

Martin Luther once said, "Prayer is the most important thing in my life. If I should neglect prayer for a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith."

Do you realize the importance of prayer for your Sunday school, your teachers and each of your members? Why not create a monthly "Church Prayer Calendar" as a daily reminder of the needs of your Sunday School for the members of your entire church.

Prepare the prayer calendar in either an actual calendar form or as a list of dates with a different general prayer concern listed for each day. Examples: the individual families of your church, children of your community, each Sunday School teacher, Iowa Yearly Meeting concerns, a friend who does not attend Sunday school, the pastor, etc. Events, services and activities related to your Sunday School, church, and community could also be listed for prayer.

The prayer calendar should be made available to all members of your church and everyone urged to include the daily prayer focus as a part of their prayers.